DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 352 395 TM 019 299

AUTHOR	Tuck, Kathy D.
TITLE	Evaluation of the Community Service Initiative (Pilot Project). District of Columbia Public Schools, School Year 1991-92.
INSTITUTION	District of Columbia Public Schools, Washington, D.C.
PUB DATE	Aug 92
NOTE	24p.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142)
EDRS PRICE	MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; Administrator Attitudes; Attitude Measures; High Schools; *High School Students; Interpersonal Relationship; Outcomes of Education; *Pilot Projects; *Principals; *Program Evaluation; Program Implementation; School Districts; Self Concept; Student Attitudes; Student Participation; Urban Schools
IDENTIFIERS	Administrator Surveys; *Community Service; *District of Columbia Public Schools; Student Surveys

ABSTRACT

The pilot project of the District of Columbia Public Schools Community Service Initiative was implemented during the spring of the 1991-92 school year. Two schools participating in the project were surveyed (including 35 students and 2 principals) regarding views on initiative merits and outcomes. Both schools engaged students in community service activities as well as a preparatory class focusing on self-perceptions, behaviors, and interpersonal relationships. Findings of the evaluation indicate that the initiative has the support of students and school administrators, and both groups seem optimistic about parental support as well. Students participated in a variety of voluntary activities and class preparations that enhanced their self-confidence and self-worth. Such attitudes prevailed among students regardless of their schools' general academic standings or the specific structures of the community service programs. However, school administrators were apprehensive about their ability to implement the program fully because of limited personnel resources. There also were administrative concerns about staff roles and responsibilities required for successful implementation of the program. Four tables and 15 bar graphs supplement the discussion. An appendix lists the community service activities. (SLD)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

KATHY D. TUCK

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

ED352395

EVALUATION OF THE

COMMUNITY SERVICE INITIATIVE

(Pilot Project)

District of Columbia Public Schools

School Year 1991-92

Franklin L. Smith
Superintendent of Schools
Chief State School Officer

August 1992

TM019299

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

District of Columbia Public Schools

AN EVALUATION OF THE COMMUNITY SERVICE INITIATIVE (Pilot Project)

Office of Educational Programs and Operations

Constance R. Clark
Deputy Superintendent

Center for Educational Change

Bettye W. Topps
Associate Superintendent

Research and Evaluation Branch

Zollie Stevenson, Jr.
Director

Prepared By:

Kathy D. Tuck
Director, Special Projects Unit

August 1992

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The pilot phase of the District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) Community Service Initiative was implemented during Spring of the school year (SY) 1991-92. Two schools participating in the pilot program were surveyed regarding their views on the merits and outcome of the initiative. Both schools engaged students in community service activities as well as a preparatory class focusing on self-perceptions, behaviors and inter-personal relations.

The findings of this evaluation clearly indicate the Community Service Initiative has the support of students and school administrators, and both groups seem optimistic about parental support as well. Students participated in a variety of voluntary activities as well as class preparations which enhanced their self-confidence and self-worth. Such attitudes prevailed among students regardless of their schools' general academic standing or the specific structure of their community service program.

However, it was also determined that school administrators are apprehensive about their ability to fully implement the community service program in SY 1992-93 because of limited personnel resources. There are also administrative concerns about staff roles and responsibilities required for successful implementation of the program.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	page
Evaluation Methodology	1
Evaluation Findings	
Community Service Activities	2
The WAVE Class	6
School Principal Survey	12
Discussion and Recommendations	13
References	15
Appendix:	
Listing of Community Service Activities	
Woodrow Wilson Senior High School	a-1
Washington-Dix Street Academy	a-3

The District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS) Community Service Initiative was developed by the Multicultural/Values Education Branch and approved by the Board of Education to begin in September 1991. According to the guidelines of the initiative, the objectives are to:

(1) increase students' perception of self-worth;
(2) provide experiences for students to contribute to society without receiving monetary payment; and
(3) prepare students better for the world of work (DCPS, 1992).

Beginning in school year (SY) 1992-93, all 10th grade students will be required to perform 100 hours of community service and will receive one Carnegie unit credit towards graduation (pending approval by the Board of Education).

The pilot phase of the Community Service Initiative was implemented during SY 1991-92 and included service activities as well as a classroom component for service preparation. The classroom component, the WAVE (work, achievement, values and education) course developed by WAVE, Inc., seeks to have "students participate in activities that emphasize personal development, encourage community service, provide leadership opportunities and offer on-going recognition (WAVE, Inc., 1991).

The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the pilot phase of the Community Service Initiative. The primary objectives of this assessment were to uncover issues and problems related to the implementation of the pilot project, and to make recommendations which will help facilitate full implementation of the program during SY 1992-93. The specific evaluation questions included: (1) the extent to which the program successfully provides positive experiences for the participants; (2) the extent to which students, parents and administrators support the idea of required community service for students; (3) the extent to which the WAVE class is useful for community service preparation (i.e., student perceptions of the course content and student receptiveness to the instructional format; and (4) whether school principals feel they have adequate support (e.g., resources and guidelines) for full implementation of the program during the 1992-93 school year.

Evaluation Methodology

Two schools participating in the pilot program were surveyed in this assessment: (1) Woodrow Wilson Senior High School; and (2) Washington-Dix Street Academy. Due to differences between these two student populations, these schools afforded the opportunity to examine the Community Service Initiative from two potentially distinct points of view. While Wilson High is comprised of some of the highest achieving students in the DCPS, Dix Street is an alternative school primarily enrolling students

deemed to be at-risk of failing and dropping out. Also, Dix Street has an on-going community service program as part of their regular school curriculum.

Three surveys were administered for this assessment: (1) to students most recently completing their community service activities; (2) to students completing the WAVE class in addition to their community service activities; and (3) to the principals of the two schools. The surveys were administered at the end of the school year in order to permit the WAVE class as well as some of the community service activities to be completed before the assessment. Due to the end-of-year schedule changes and the unavailability of several program participants, this time frame, however, served as a limitation to the administration of the surveys.

Evaluation Findings

Community Service Activities

Nine of the 12 students completing community service activities at Wilson High were surveyed. These students were in grades 10 to 12, were an average age of 16.8 years old and were over one-half male (55.6%). Eight of the 45 community service students at Dix Street were surveyed and were in grades 11 and 12. The average age of the Dix Street students surveyed was 19.5 years old and all were female.

Significant differences were found in the structure of the two school programs. Although the majority (82.4%) of the students at both schools began their community service activities during the third advisory of the school year, there were differences in the number of activities engaged in by the students at the two schools as well as differences in the duration of the activities at the two schools. Wilson High students engaged in more service activities than Dix Street students with an average of 16.0 and 1.38 projects per student, respectively, $F(1,12,)=22.22$, $p<.01$. However, Dix Street students participated in their activities for a longer time period with the majority (62.5%) of Dix Street students' activities lasting 4 to 8 weeks, while the majority of the Wilson High students' activities lasted less than one week (chi sq.=10.64, $p<.05$) (see the Appendix for a listing of activities).

No significant differences, however, were found between the schools with regard to student attitudes toward their community service activities. As shown in Table 1 and Figures 1 to 6, students were generally satisfied with their experiences.

TABLE 1

My community service projects:	TRUE	FALSE	NOT SURE
		(percent)	
(a) made me a more responsible person	94.1	0.0	5.9
(b) made me feel like I made an important contribution	88.2	11.8	0.0
(c) taught me how to work better with adults	100.0	0.0	0.0
(d) taught me new things I am good at	64.7	17.6	17.6
(e) taught me new things I am not so good at	88.2	11.8	0.0
(f) helped me to learn about my career options	58.8	17.6	23.5

FIGURE 1

How much would you recommend your community service project(s) to other students?

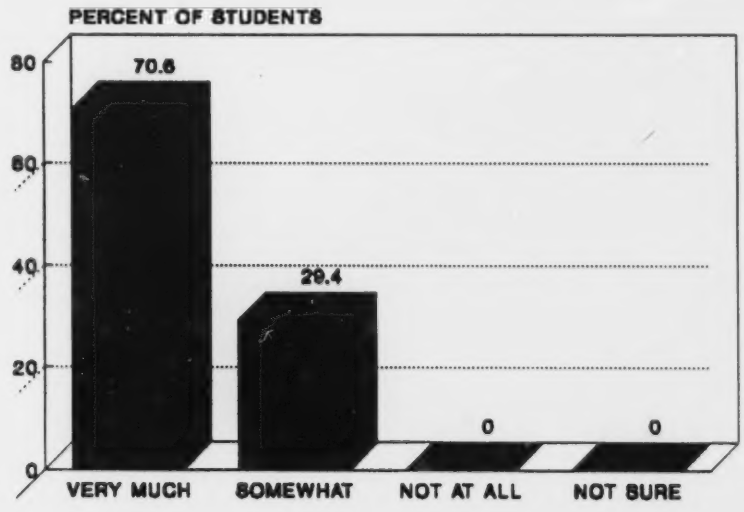


FIGURE 2

How much did your parent(s) like your participation in your community service project(s)?

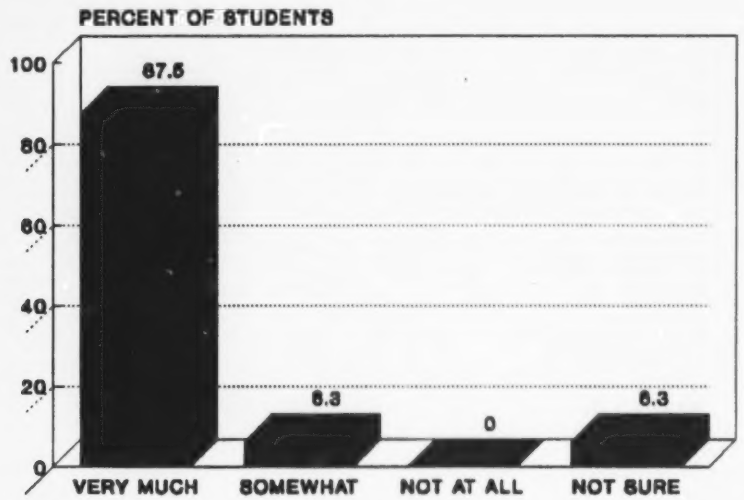


FIGURE 3

Do you feel students should be required to do a community service project before graduation from high school?

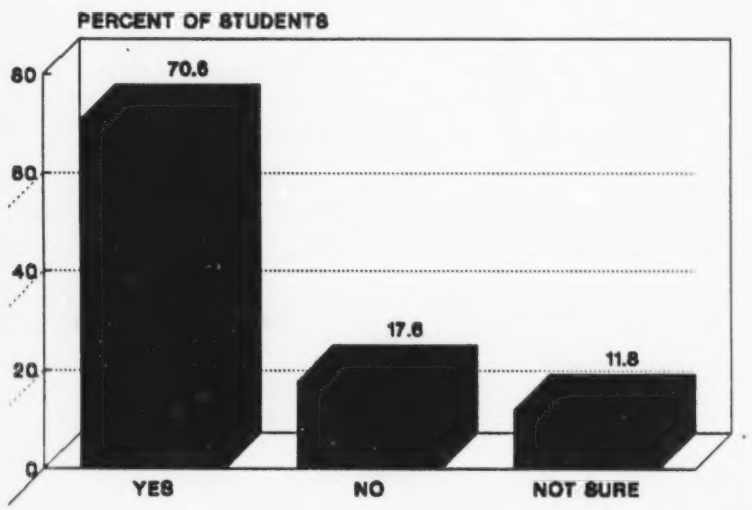


FIGURE 4

Would you like to have a career similar to any of your community service projects this school year?

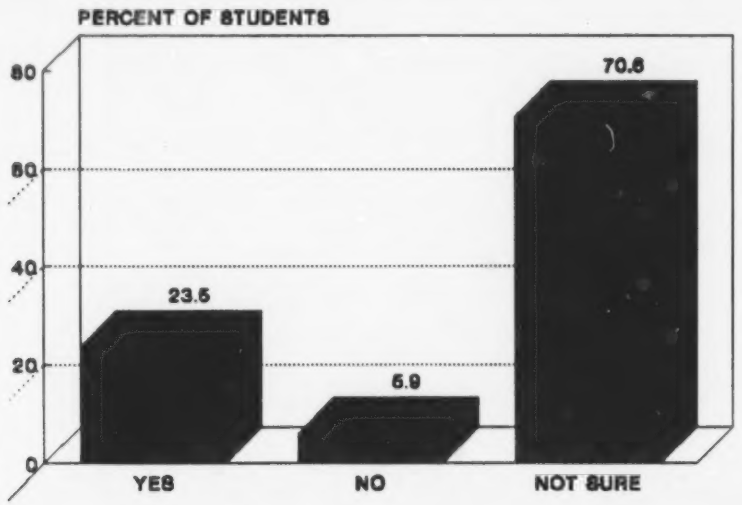
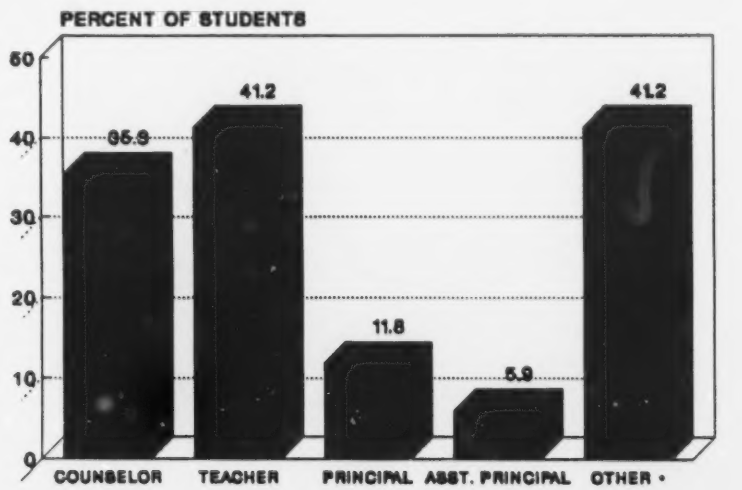


FIGURE 5

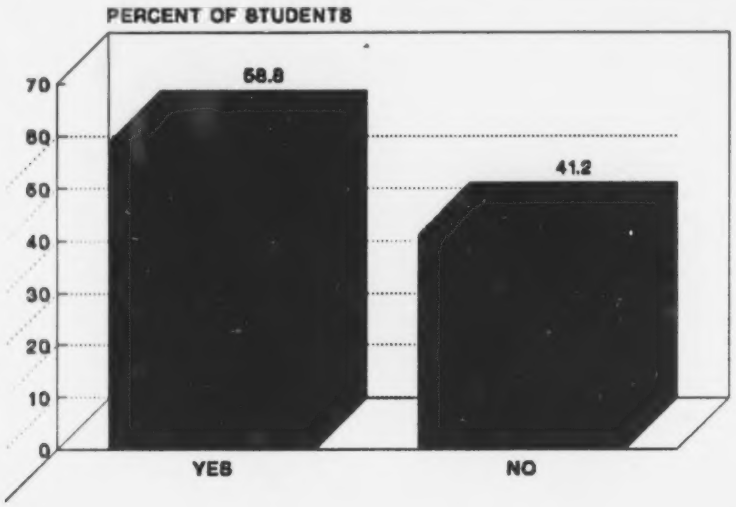
Who did you talk to at your school about problems you faced in your community service project(s)?



* Individuals outside DCPS

FIGURE 6

Did you take the WAVE class taught at your school? (responses noted only for students performing community service activities)



The WAVE Class

Eight students in grades 10 to 12 participating in the WAVE class were surveyed from Wilson High. These students were an average age of 16.7 years old, and the majority were male (62.5%). Ten 11th and 12th grade participants in the Dix Street WAVE class were surveyed. The Dix street students were an average age of 18.1 years old, and the number of males and females were evenly divided.

No significant differences were found between the schools with regard to student attitudes toward the WAVE class, however, statistically significant differences were found between certain attitudes of WAVE and non-WAVE students regarding their participation in community service activities. It was found that 90.0% of students taking the WAVE class (versus 28.6% of students who did not take the class) indicated their community service projects taught them new things they were good at (chi sq.=7.49, $p<.05$). Similarly, 90.0% of the WAVE students (versus 42.9% of non-WAVE students) indicated they would highly recommend their community service project(s) to other students (Fisher's Exact $p<.05$), and 80.0% of the WAVE students (versus 57.1% of the non-WAVE students) felt that community service should be required for students before graduation (chi sq.=5.99, $p<.05$). These attitudes were found to be unrelated to the school site, grade or gender of the survey participants.

As shown in Tables 2 to 4 and Figures 7 to 15, the general attitude toward the WAVE class experience was positive.

TABLE 2

The WAVE class taught met to:	TRUE	FALSE (percent)	NOT SURE
(a) understand myself better	55.6	16.7	27/8
(b) understand my friends better	38.9	50.0	11.1
(c) understand family roles better	44.4	44.4	11.1
(d) feel more confident about my abilities	66.7	27.8	5.6
(e) understand my career choices	50.0	33.3	16.7
(f) be more responsible with my money	38.9	50.0	11.1
(g) communicate better with adults	66.7	27.8	5.6
(h) communicate better with my friends	38.9	38.9	22.2

FIGURE 7

How much did you understand the lessons presented in the class?

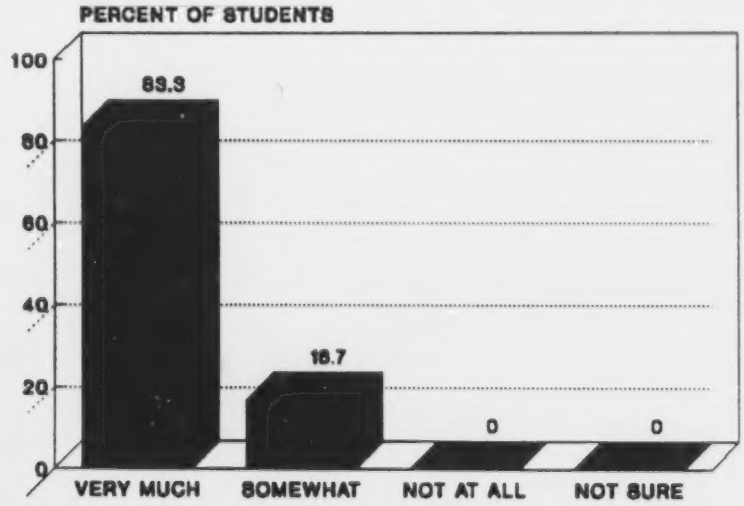


FIGURE 8

How much did you actively participate in the class activities?

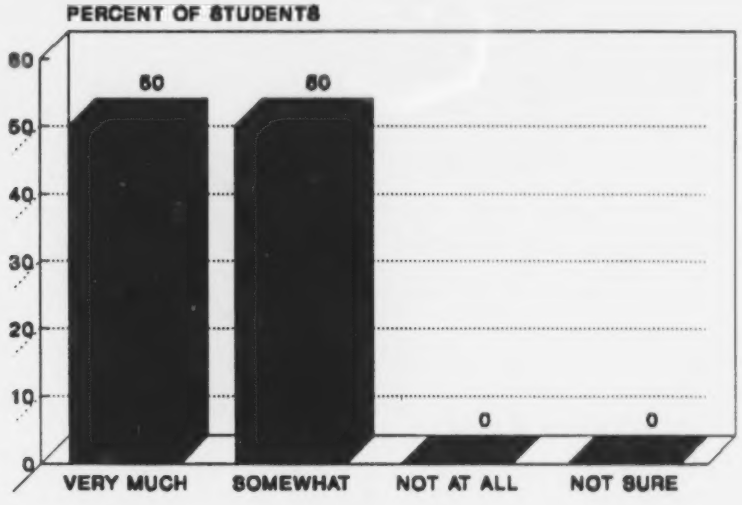


FIGURE 9

Which (WAVE class grouping) did you prefer more?

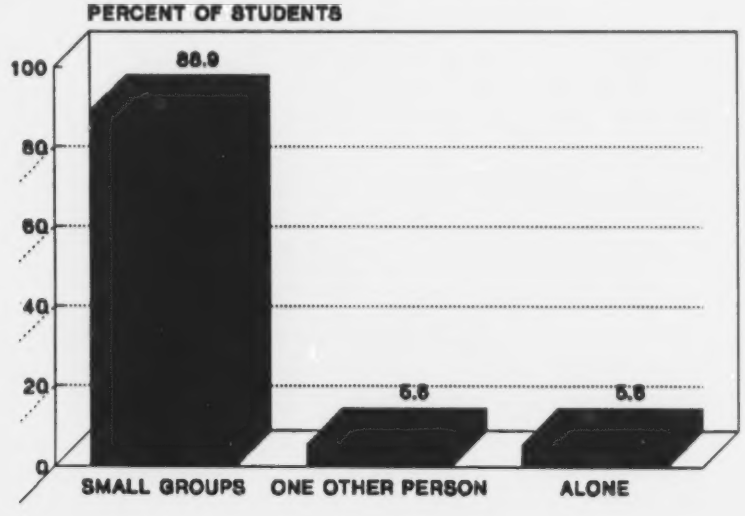


FIGURE 10

Which (WAVE class format) did you prefer more?

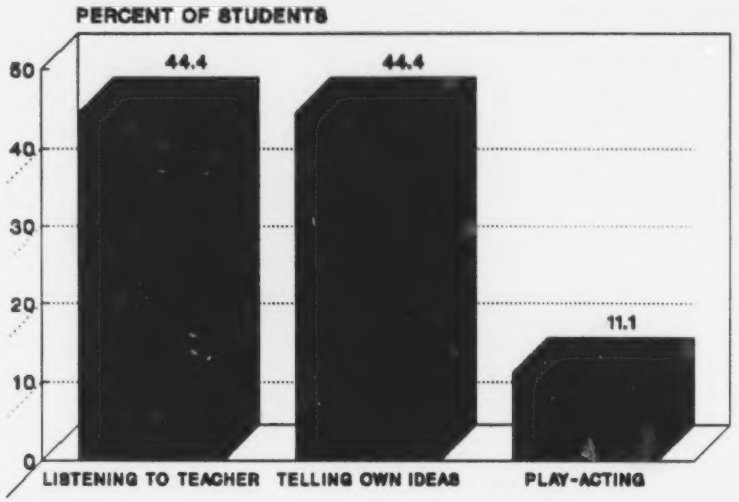


FIGURE 11

How much were the class lessons related to your day-to-day life experiences?

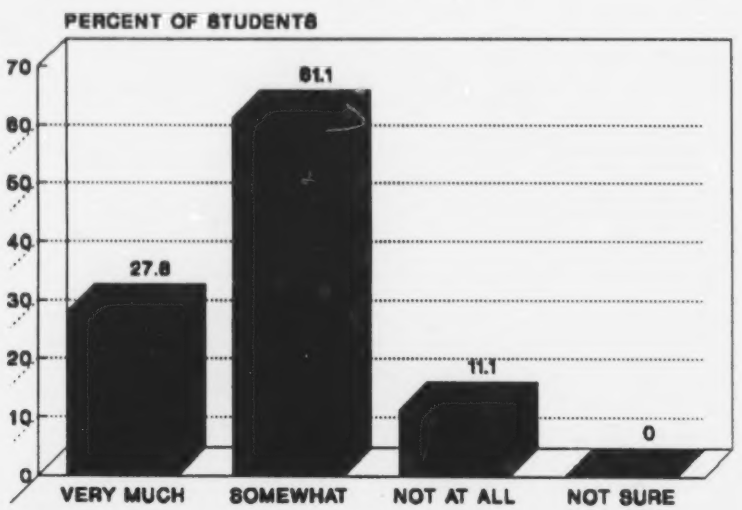


FIGURE 12

Did you participate in a community service project this school year? (responses noted only for students taking the WAVE course)

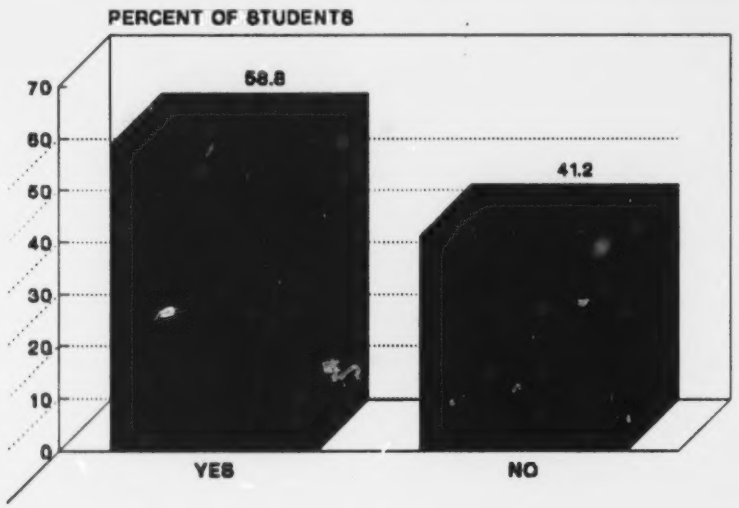


FIGURE 13

Did the WAVE class help you to do a better job in your community service project(s)? (responses noted only for WAVE students performing community service activities)

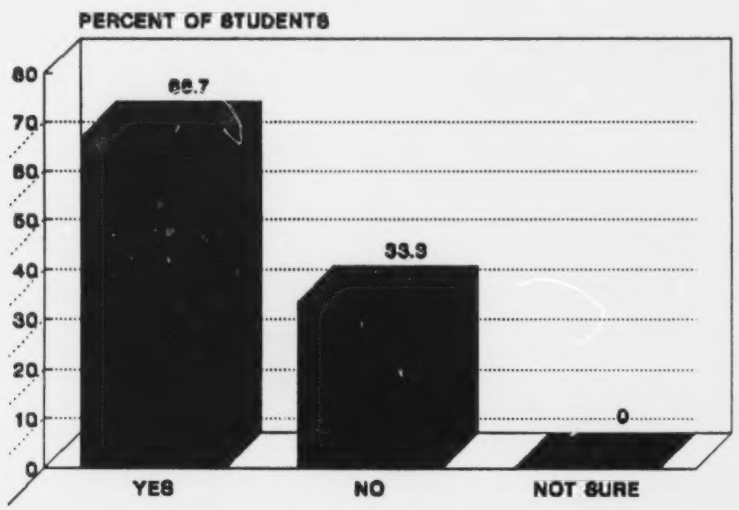


FIGURE 14

How much would you recommend the WAVE class to other students?

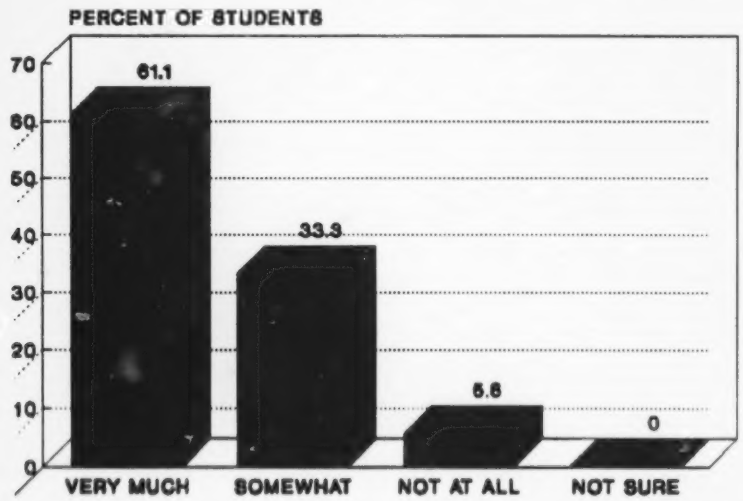


FIGURE 15

Do you feel the WAVE class should be required before doing a community service project?

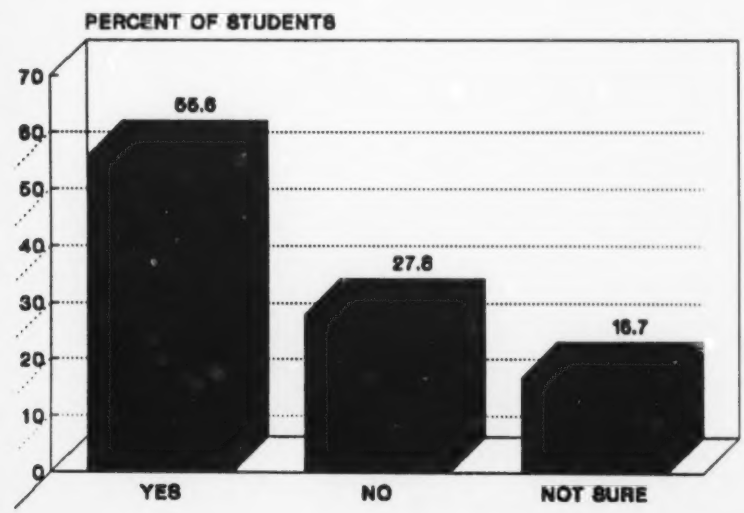


TABLE 3

What did you like most about the WAVE class?

	number	percent
NOTHING SPECIFICALLY	5	27.8
EVERYTHING	2	11.1
THE TEACHER	2	11.1
THE SPEAKERS	2	11.1
LEARNED A LOT	2	11.1
GROUP PARTICIPATION	1	5.6
LEARNING TELEPHONE ETIQUETTE	1	5.6
OTHER STUDENTS	1	5.6
WORKBOOK ACTIVITIES	1	5.6
NO GRADING SYSTEM	1	5.6

TABLE 4

What did you not like most about the WAVE class?

	number	percent
NOTHING SPECIFICALLY	10	55.6
NOT RELATED TO COMMUNITY SERVICE	2	11.1
TOO EARLY IN THE MORNING	2	11.1
TOO MUCH READING	1	5.6
WORKBOOK ACTIVITIES	1	5.6
CLASS TOO SHORT ON TIME	1	5.6
PURPOSE OF CLASS (COMMUNITY SERVICE)	1	5.6

School Principal Survey

The principal at Dix Street indicated that students were "very excited" about their participation in community service activities, while the principal at Wilson High feels students there were "less than enthusiastic". Both school principals feel that parents, however, definitely support the community service

initiative.

With regard to the merit of the program, both principals agreed that the community service activities will help their students learn more personal responsibility, experience different career choices and understand personal rewards apart from money. The Wilson High principal was slightly less optimistic than the Dix street principal as to whether the community service activities will help students learn the ethics of professional work and whether it will help students learn to interact better with adults in authority.

Both principals agreed that adequate resources and personnel were "definitely not" presently available in their schools to arrange and facilitate community service activities for all participating students, and neither were optimistic about future resources. Additionally, while both principals indicated they were familiar with the proposed guidelines for the Community Service Initiative, they were not in agreement that the guidelines adequately explained their responsibilities to the program as school principal.

DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This assessment of the Community Service Initiative (pilot project) reflects the perceptions of both student participants and school principals. However, as noted earlier, a number of student participants, at Dix Street in particular, who had completed their service activities earlier during the school year were unavailable to respond to the survey. Therefore, the responses presented here are primarily the viewpoints of Dix Street students and Wilson High students most recently completing their community service requirement. Also, due to the range of the students surveyed (i.e., moderate to high achievers and students at-risk), it is expected that the survey responses reflect a level of diversity which is characteristic of the general DCPS senior high school population.

In summary, the findings of this assessment clearly indicate that students and school principals support the Community Service Initiative, and both groups feel they have the support of parents as well. In fact, it was found that the majority of students support the idea of community service as a graduation requirement. It is also clear that there are an abundance of community service activities available in the city that can provide meaningful experiences for DCPS students (see Appendix). Although community service activities do not appear to influence the majority of students regarding career opportunities, other personal benefits are quite apparent and are the primary goals of the community service program. Such benefits include both enhanced students' perceptions of themselves and their

contributions.

The WAVE class offered in preparation for the community service activities was also positively received by students. Moreover, it is noted that students completing the course appear to have a greater appreciation for their community service activities than students who did not take the course. WAVE students also seem to be highly responsive to the participatory style under which the class was conducted. Although the course seems to be only moderately beneficial to students in their interpersonal relationships such as with friends and family members, the course had greater success in enhancing self-perceptions and communication with adults.

Overall, the Community Service Initiative appears to be well received, and similarly by students from both high achieving and alternative school settings. It is also noted that students had positive experiences in both types of program structures examined here (i.e., many activities lasting a short time period versus one or two activities lasting a longer time period).

This evaluation did, however, reveal an overriding concern about the adequacy of resources and personnel support allocated to the Community Service Initiative. While the school principals highly support the program and seem to recognize its benefits to students, they unanimously agreed that resources are inadequate, particularly for fully implementing the program for all 10th students as mandated in the program guidelines for SY 1992-93. Moreover, they also have concerns about their roles and responsibilities in the program.

In view of these program strengths and limitations, the following recommendations are made:

(1) the Community Service Initiative should proceed with full implementation, but only after:
   (a) sufficient personnel and fiscal resources are identified and allocated to the schools (with input from school principals), not only for arranging and facilitating student activities, but also for providing student counseling and monitoring; and
   (b) school administrators are sufficiently informed about their roles and responsibilities as well as those of their staff

(2) the WAVE class should be offered as a prerequisite to the community service activities, but more emphasis should be placed on interpersonal relations and behaviors with friends and family members who are most likely to have the greatest influence on the value-judgements of students and, thus, likely to indirectly affect the outcome of the community service experience

REFERENCES

District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS). (1992) Towards a Valued Centered Community: Guidelines for Community Service Initiatives (Draft). Washington, D.C.: Office of Educational Programs and Operations, Multicultural/Values Education Branch.

WAVE, Inc. (Work, Achievement, Values and Education) (1991). The WAVE: Teacher Guidebook, Level 4. Washington, D.C.: WAVE, Inc.

APPENDIX

LISTING OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

LISTING OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

WOODROW WILSON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

(1) Volunteered at the National Youth Day
(2) Volunteered at the Wilson High School International Gala
(3) Participated in YMCA Partner with Youth Victory Dinner
(4) Volunteered at YMCA Partner with Youth Fundraiser (Phone-A-Thon and School Meeting)
(5) Volunteered with Christmas in April (2 days)
(6) Volunteered at Friendship House (Clothing Drive)
(7) Volunteered at Salvation Army (Clothing Drive)
(8) Escorted Homeless Children to the Ringling Brothers Circus
(9) Volunteered at Martha's Table
  (a) made and donated hundreds of sandwiches (4 times)
  (b) worked in the soup kitchen
  (c) went in vans to feed the homeless (10 times)
  (d) participated in food and clothing drive (6 times)
  (e) assisted with Easter dinner
(10) Volunteered at the American Cancer Society
(11) Volunteered at Providence Hospital
(12) Volunteered with the D.C. Service Corps
(13) Participated in the DCPS Homeless Awareness Week
(14) Volunteered with Delta Kappa Gama (Perez family house gifts)
(15) Sponsored a Clothing Drive (Perez family)
(16) Volunteered at the Woodrow Wilson High School Real Estate Breakfast
(17) Volunteered at the Ronald McDonald House (prepared dinner for 50 families)
(18) Participated in the D.C. Youth Summit
(19) Volunteered at the D.C. Special Olympics
(20) Participated in the Woodrow Wilson Beautification (2 times)
(21) Volunteered at the Blair and La Casa Homeless Shelter (4 times)
(22) Prepared and donated cake to American Cancer Society program
(23) Volunteered at the Woodrow Wilson Annual Spring Concert
(24) Visited the White House
(25) Assisted with the D.C. Youth Nestle Chocolate $10,000 Grant competition
(26) Volunteered at Washington Hospital Center
(27) Participated in the National Volunteer Week (Highlighted a volunteer agency each day from April 27 - May 1)

LISTING OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

WOODROW WILSON SENIOR HIGH SCHOOL

(continued)

(28) Volunteered at the Black Male Conference (Ballou Sr. High School)
(29) Volunteered at the Jubilee Housing Project (yardwork)
(30) Volunteered as Hostesses
  (a) Rainbow Coalition/Jesse Jackson Gala Dinner
  (b) Rainbow Coalition/Governor Clinton Luncheon
(31) Organized School Fundraiser (phone-a-thon and mailing)
(32) Volunteered with Channeling Anger

Speakers, Guest and Workshops

(1) Captain Wyndell C. Watkins (D.C. Metropolitan Police)
(2) D.C. Department of Employment Services
(3) Institute for Mental Health Initiatives
(4) D.C. General Hospital (Boarder Babies)
(5) James Lindsey (Volunteer Clearing House)
(6) Christine Nollen (Blair and La Casa Shelters)
(7) Ms. Erika Landberg (D.C. Board of Education)
(8) Mrs. Beverly Wallace (DCPS Homeless Office)
(9) Ernest Yombo (Latin American Youth Center)
(10) Bernedette Tolson (D.C. Dept. of Human Services)
(11) Don Summons (WAVE Workshops - 6 times)
(12) Dr. Bauder (Christmas in April)
(13) Mrs. Prival Wilson (P.T.A. Co-President)
(14) Carla Halbotten (Channel 7 Community Service)
(15) Steve Fitzhugh (Youth Services Coordinator, D.C. Community Prevention Partnership)
(16) Action on Homelessness and Illiteracy
(17) Prejudice Reduction Workshop
(18) Diversity Workshops

LISTING OF COMMUNITY SERVICE ACTIVITIES

WASHINGTON-DIX STREET ACADEMY

List of Volunteer Sites:

(1) Department of Justice
(2) Department of Health and Human Services
(3) Kenilworth Elementary School
(4) Superior Court of the District of Columbia
(Chambers of Judge Cheryl M. Long)
(5) Park Naylor Swimming Pool
(6) Dapartment of Human Resource Development
(7) Metropolitan Police Boys and Girls Club (Club #4)
(8) Kaiser Permanente
(9) Kenilworth School
(10) Washington Hospital Center
(11) Community-Families United
(12) WHUR-FM (Howard University Radio Station)
(13) PDQ Enterprises, Inc.
(14) Howard University Hospital
(15) Greater Southeast Hospital